

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

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1. A method of distributing data for use in a catalog, comprising:
capturing product data for a product according to a data model, the data model having one or more classes, each one of the one or more classes being defined by one or more categories, each of the one or more categories being defined by an attribute group having one or more attributes; and
storing the product data, wherein the stored product data is suitable for use in an electronic catalog.
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2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein capturing product data includes:
classifying a product to be entered according to the data model; and
rendering a data entry template associated with the category of the classified product, wherein the data entry template includes a listing of potential values associated with each of the attributes in the category of the classified product, wherein the listing of potential values identify values that are selectable as values for the associated attribute.
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3. The method as recited in claim 2, wherein the rendering further includes repeating the listing of potential values for the classified product when the attribute group associated with the classified product is indicated to be a repeating group in the data model.
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4. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein each attribute is associated with a possible value list including values that are selectable and selected searchable attributes are specified, wherein the step of capturing product data includes reviewing product information for a particular product and selecting specific values from the possible value list for each of the selected searchable attributes.
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5. The method as recited in claim 4, wherein each attribute is further associated with a possible unit list including units that are selectable and wherein the step of

capturing product data further includes selecting specific units from the possible unit list for at least some of the selected searchable attributes.

6. The method as recited in claim 1, further including creating a product header that is associated with the product, wherein creating the product header includes storing a system SKU associated with the product in the product header; storing a manufacturer SKU associated with the product in the product header; and associating the product header with product information characterizing the product.

7. The method as recited in claim 6, wherein the product information includes one of the one or more categories and a manufacturer product description, the manufacturer product description describing standard features of the product.

8. The method as recited in claim 6, further including: linking the product header to one or more images illustrating the product.

9. The method as recited in claim 6, further including: linking the product header to a marketing description of the product.

10. The method as recited in claim 1, further including: specifying one or more countries for which the product is adapted for sale.

11. The method as recited in claim 1, further including: providing one or more possible countries that are selectable as countries for which the product is adapted for sale.

12. The method as recited in claim 1, further including: linking to one or more related products that are recommended as related to the product.

13. The method as recited in claim 1, further including:

linking to platform compatibility information associated with the product.

14. The method as recited in claim 1, further including:
providing one or more possible platforms that are selectable as platforms with
which the product is compatible.

15. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein each attribute has an associated
possible value list that identifies values that are selectable as values for the associated
attribute and wherein storing the product data further includes:

storing selected attributes in an attribute table, each of the selected attributes
being identified by a system SKU and having at least one of the values in the
associated possible value list.

16. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein capturing product data for the
product includes:

classifying the product according to a data model having one or more classes,
wherein each of the classes is arranged to identify one or more associated categories
and each of the categories is arranged to identify an associated attribute group having
one or more attributes, each attribute having an associated possible value list that
identifies values that are selectable as values for the associated attribute;

selecting at least one of the values in the associated possible value list for
selected attributes in the associated attribute group; and

inputting the selected values for the product to the system product data file.

17. The method as recited in claim 16, wherein capturing data for the product
further includes:

inputting one or more images illustrating the product to the system product
data file.

18. The method as recited in claim 16, wherein capturing data for the product
further includes:

inputting a marketing description associated with the product to the system
product data file.

19. The method as recited in claim 16, wherein capturing data for the product further includes:

inputting to the system product data file one or more countries for which the product is adapted for sale.

20. The method as recited in claim 16, wherein capturing data for the product further includes:

inputting to the system product data file a list identifying one or more related products that are recommended as related to the product.

21. The method as recited in claim 16, wherein capturing data for the product further includes:

inputting to the system product data file platform compatibility information associated with the product.

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